



Scoil Náisiúnta Baile Chaisleáin an Róistigh

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed in March 2023 by staff members

Introduction Statement:

Castletownroche National School does not tolerate any type of bullying. Our school regards bullying as a serious infringement of individual rights and a huge threat to the self-confidence and self-esteem of the pupil(s) targeted. If bullying should occur our immediate priority is to end the bullying and resolve the issues and restore the relationships involved as far as is practicable using a Reform and non-blame approach. Our school community including pupils, staff, parents etc. have a responsibility to create and maintain a safe and positive school environment and have an important role in the prevention of any kind of bullying. Mobile phones are prohibited by students and a strict internet acceptable use policy is in place. Parents are aware of these practices within the school and are expected to monitor devices such as mobile phones and computers that their child(ren) have access to outside of school hours. Bullying incidences that may occur should always be reported.

Aims:

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Castletownroche National School has **adopted the following anti-bullying policy** within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.

2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following **key principles of best practice** in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

(a) A positive school culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity; encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and promotes respectful relationships across the school community (which includes school management, staff, pupils, parents etc.).

(b) Effective leadership (including leadership from school management, staff, pupils, parents etc.)

(c) A school-wide approach (including different roles for school management, principal, staff, pupils and parents)

(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact

(e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and trans phobic bullying; effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils

(g) Supports for staff (awareness and education/support in the ways in which bullying may be dealt with).

(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and

(i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

School, Playground, Classroom Rules etc. are implemented and aim to minimise times, areas etc. where bullying may occur.

3. In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* **bullying is defined** as follows:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

Stay Safe Definition: Bullying is hurtful, deliberate & repeated

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying (These are examples and are non-exhaustive)

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying (internet etc.)
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour. Ideally, such incidents should be dealt with by parents/guardians, however in the event of such incidents coming to the attention of the school management; the school will intervene in an appropriate manner.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.(examples of this include violent behaviour etc.) In the incidence that physical violent behaviour occurs this will be viewed as assault and any such incidences of a serious nature may be passed on to the Gardaí.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Examples of bullying behaviours

<p>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression • Damage to property • Name calling • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • A combination of any of the types listed.
<p>Cyber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name • Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group • Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages • Abusive emails • Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles etc. • Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
<p>Identity Based Behaviours Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).</p>	
<p>Homophobic and Transgender</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Physical intimidation or attacks
<p>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above

Relational	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • Use of terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment <p>Cf Child Protection Policy</p>
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: All Class Teachers/Principal/Deputy Principal. **Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.**

5. The **education and prevention strategies**, appropriate and relevant to each class level that will be used by the school are as follows:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community. • The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. • The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through curricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions. • Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention. • An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources • School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community. • Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school. • Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school. • The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils of each class annually in an appropriate manner. |
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- All parent(s)/guardian(s) are annually made aware that our Anti-Bullying Policy is available to view on our school website www.ctrns.ie alongside the Code of Behaviour of the school.
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly. It is school policy to protect the names of pupils who complain or report bullying in so far as is practicable.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell. Pupils are always encouraged to tell a trusted adult e.g. Teacher if they are being bullied or witness others being bullied.
- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored.
- The effectiveness of our Anti Bullying Policy involves the active cooperation of school management, staff, pupils and parents.

Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE curricula and the RSE programmes
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme,
- Our local Garda speaks to the children on occasions during the year regarding safety etc.
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
- The school will implement the RSE Programme. (Busy Bodies or a similar programme is delivered every second year to 5th and 6th class pupils.

6. The school's **procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies** used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);

The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), cleaners etc. must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant)teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach;
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils;
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

Follow up and recording

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
 - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
 - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
 - Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;
 - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording of bullying behaviour

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- All staff must keep a written record (incident books/Aladdin) of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record (incident books/Aladdin) of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records(incident books/Aladdin) which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher (incident books/Aladdin)

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- a) in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
- b) Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The school should list behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal. These should be in line with the school's Code of Behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be created and retained by the relevant teacher in question and it will be brought to the attention of the Principal. This recording template will be kept on Aladdin Connect in the particular student's file. It will be retained throughout the child's time at Castletownroche N.S. It will not form a part of any report being sent to another school in the event of a transfer to another primary school or transition to secondary school.

Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Peer mediation where suitable training has been given

The procedures mention the following intervention strategies and reference Ken Rigby; [www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools Ken Rigby.pdf](http://www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools%20Ken%20Rigby.pdf)

- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim

- Mediation
- Restorative Practice
- The Support Group Method
- The Method of Shared Concern

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

The school's support programme for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Bullying behaviour varies and therefore no one intervention/support programme works in all situations hence various different approaches and intervention programmes may be used. Suggestions may be made to parents in certain incidences to seek referrals where necessary so that appropriate outside agencies may provide further support to pupils and their families when needed.

Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

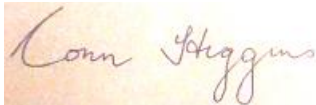
9. Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.


Ratification of Policy: This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 7/3/'23

Policy review: In accordance with the systematic review of policies in Castletownroche N.S., this policy will be reviewed annually or immediately following any serious incidences or if a need arises.

Staff will be informed that the review has been completed. The updated policy will be readily accessible to all members of the school community; a policy folder will be available in all classrooms, it will be published on the school website & will also be provided to the Parent's Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: 

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: 

(Principal)

Date: 7/3/'23

Date of next review: March 2024

Questioning pupils individually as soon as possible after an incident is reported.

Try to do outside of classroom (In cases of recurring or serious incidences, 2 adults are to be present with the pupil)

When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner as soon as possible after the incident.

What happened?

Where did this happen?

When did this happen?

Who was there?

Why did this happen?

Date: _____

Present: _____

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Pupil's Incident Report Form

This is what happened...

Signed: _____ Date: _____